

May 17, 1972

Dear Harold,

As I mentioned in my letter of 5/8, Jackie K's testimony has been released, perhaps as a result of my F of I requests. I just got a copy today. (Enclosed)

I am sending this off to you right away because I don't recall whether you have also been after this. Also, it may have some bearing on our pending F of I business. So, I am enclosing an extra copy of this letter for you to forward to Jim Lesar if you think it appropriate. Unless either of you feels there is something funny going on, I would be inclined just to let Jim put this in the next issue of his newsletter. But, there may be more here than meets the eye. One reading is that the feds' concern for the Kennedy sensibilities has weakened. On the chance that the release of this may make sense in terms of some of the funny business (re Lattimer, etc.) that you have alluded to but not explained, I am not sending it to anyone else right now.

I don't think anything can be made of the substance of the famous deletion. ("Reference to wounds deleted") (5H180). That is, "I was trying to hold his hair on. But from the front there was nothing. I suppose there must have been. But from the back you could see, you know, you ~~was~~ were trying to hold his hair on, and his skull on." Jackie may have been closer to breaking down here than the transcript indicates.

There are a ~~couple~~ couple of more interesting deletions not indicated in the volumes. "And Governor Connally screamed like a stuck pig." Jackie ~~said~~ said that if she had pulled JFK down, "the second shot would have gotten Governor Connally." This was cleaned up to "the second shot ~~was~~ would not have hit him (JFK)". Someone should compare the text of the entire testimony, word for word, and look for intermediate copies or correspondence to indicate who did the changes. It would be best if you or Jim could go to the Archives for this; if a letter has to be written let me know and I will do it myself. (I don't think they would be very quick to help you.)

There are a couple of other ~~deletions~~ deletions that are primarily or totally editorial - e.g., "this" for "that" in the last line. Typically the witnesses or the staff attorneys made that ~~kind~~ kind of change, didn't they? I recall that you went through some of the transcripts some time ago, but I don't recall if this one was checked. It should be.

Note that the copy sent we has a deleted 'Confidential' stamp, not a Top Secret one. The date of declassification was cut off my copy; I would like to know what it was. Let me remind you about my requests: I originally asked for it this years ago, and made a formal request on July 31, 1971. I wasn't that interested in the contents; it seemed like a good test case. Angel's reply, ~~Nov~~ Nov. 10, denied this, citing "investigatory ~~file~~ file" and "details of a personal nature having no significant connection with the assassination." I appealed by letter of Nov. 30, which you have. GSA letter of May 3 said it had been released and was enclosed, but it wasn't; I wrote back on May 8 and got the testimony today.

I haven't had any time to think about this, but I ~~was~~ want to get this in the mail for you tonight. (Then back to my thesis.)

Best,

*Paul*

PLH